



Stormwater Needs Assessment Project

Fairfax County Stormwater Advisory Committee
Stormwater Needs Assessment Project
Meeting #2
October 12, 2004, 7 – 9 p.m.
Fairfax County Pennino Building
Room 206 A and B

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance:

Stormwater Advisory Committee:

Kimberly Davis	Jessica Fleming	Harry Glasgow
Robert Jordan	Robert McLaren	Sally Ormsby
Greg Prelewicz	Michael Rolband	Mark Trostle
Mary Beth Hoya		

Consultants:

Elizabeth Treadway
Doug Moseley
Curt Ostrodka

County Staff:

Jimmie Jenkins	Paul Shirey
Carl Bouchard	Krystal Kearns
Fred Rose	Scott St. Clair
Vishnu Seri	Laura Grape
Debra Bianchi	Michelle Brickner

Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Review of Agenda
3. Stormwater Program Services in Fairfax County
4. Level of Service Discussion

Welcome and Introductions

Carl Bouchard, Director of the Stormwater Planning Division, opened the meeting with a welcome message for the committee members and reiterated the County's thanks for their service. He reintroduced each committee member to the group, as well as the County's consulting team.

Review of Agenda

Mr. Moseley offered a brief overview of the meeting's agenda. He asked the committee if they had comments on the previous meeting's minutes. No comments on the minutes were offered. The committee then posed a question to the County about its mission, noting that perhaps the meetings should focus primarily on "how to sell" the stormwater



Stormwater Needs Assessment Project

utility fee to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Bouchard noted that the purpose of the committee is to test the conclusions reached in the first phase of the project, and that a stormwater utility is not presupposed. The committee must review all of the available funding options, as well as determine the appropriate level of service based upon the expectations of the citizens. The committee did note that not every participant is a stormwater expert, and it is therefore necessary to proceed accordingly.

Stormwater Services in Fairfax County

Mr. Bouchard reviewed the services that the Stormwater Planning Division (SPD) provides to the citizens of Fairfax County. SPD's main program areas include:

- Capital Improvement Projects
- Stormwater Management
- Watershed Assessment and Monitoring
- Emergency Preparedness
- Public Outreach and Involvement
- Development Plan Review and Support

The SPD must also comply with state and federal mandates and regulations, many of which are unfunded. These mandates and regulations include:

- Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS-4) Permit
- Virginia Tributaries Strategy
- Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)
- Chesapeake Bay 2000 Agreement

Mr. Bouchard noted that although SPD is providing many valuable services to Fairfax County, the division is unable to meet current community needs, capital improvement requirements and requests for assistance. For example, SPD is currently only implementing projects under categories 1 and 2 (usually emergency projects such as house flooding) of the Board of Supervisor's seven Priority Project categories. In addition, SPD recognizes that adequate resources for Watershed Management Plan implementation, which will protect and restore the County's streams, as well as comply with state and federal regulations are lacking. Finally, SPD is unable to provide an improved response time to its customer base.

Scott St. Clair, Director of the Maintenance and Stormwater Management Division (MSMD), reviewed the services that MSMD provides to Fairfax County. The MSMD is responsible for the following programs:

- **Storm Drainage**
- Snow Removal at County Government Facilities
- Emergency Response (Fire & Rescue)
- **PL566 (State Regulated) Dams**
- Commuter Rail and Park-n-Ride Parking Lots
- **Stormwater Management**
- Street Name Signs
- Walkways and Trails
- Bus Shelters
- Fairfax County Road Maintenance and Improvement Program



Stormwater Needs Assessment Project

Mr. St. Clair continued the discussion by reviewing the County's physical inventory of storm drainage and stormwater management infrastructure. The County's inventory as presently captured is as follows:

		Fairfax County	VDOT	Property Owner
	Pipes	1,400 miles	1,000 miles	200 miles
Conveyance and Collection System	Inlets & Catch Basins	37,000	40,000	8,000
	Improved Channels	25 miles	20 miles	10 miles
	Natural Streams	800 miles	5 miles	400 miles
Stormwater Management Facilities	Onsite Facilities	1,100 facilities	75 facilities	2,200 facilities
	Regional Facilities	45 facilities	4 facilities	15 facilities

Mr. St. Clair noted that MSMD developed a work order prioritization in 2001 to address citizen requests for assistance. **Priority 1** work orders refer to a *Failed-Emergency* condition, such as a house flooding, structural endangerment, or roadway flooding that is a high risk to citizen safety. **Priority 2** work orders refer to a *Failed – Critical and Non-Emergency* condition, such as an obstructed inlet or channel. **Priority 3** work orders refer to a *Poor* condition, such as a highly eroded stream channel or a cracked headwall. Mr. St. Clair noted that the average time needed to complete a Priority 1 work order has increased from 28.9 days in 2002 to 41.9 days in 2004. It was noted that response time for all three priority repairs is increasing.

Mr. St. Clair stated that MSMD's maintenance work is limited to the repair and correction of existing facilities. Based on available resources, the division limits its maintenance-related activity to three to five crew days. If a maintenance request exceeds five crew days in effort, the site is stabilized/addressed to the extent possible in the time period and the work order is referred to either Capital Projects (for things like emergency house flooding) or to the Replacement Program, which is currently unfunded.

The group then discussed the services and responsibilities of the MSMD. If stormwater runoff leaves a VDOT right-of-way, then MSMD is responsible to provide service. It was noted that VDOT is not required to meet the performance standards set in the Fairfax County Public Facilities Manual (PFM). Mr. St. Clair stated that regular inspections of VDOT ponds can prevent early failures. He noted that MSMD has one inspector for every 60-70 sites.

The County can only perform maintenance on properties that have existing County easements. The committee inquired as to the division's current budget to perform all of the noted maintenance activities. Mr. St. Clair noted that as the demand for service has increased over the past five years, the amount of funding in the division's budget for



Stormwater Needs Assessment Project

maintenance activities has decreased. Mr. St. Clair estimated that one full year of maintenance work has been lost due to funding cuts over the last five years. As part of MSMD's maintenance service, the division does examine its pipe and conveyance system. However, MSMD's examination only includes a visual check with mirrors and flashlights to detect obvious pipe obstructions. Mr. St. Clair stated that MSMD does not have an infrastructure replacement program or schedule at this time. He noted that a targeted inspection program to perform infrastructure assessments would help the County understand which pipes are failing; many of the pipes are near or past their 45-50 year anticipated life. Mr. St. Clair stated that a consultant team is currently digitizing pipe locations to create an inventory in a limited manner.

Level and Extent of Service Discussion

Ms. Treadway asked the committee members to think about how they would answer three basic questions related to the level and extent of stormwater service:

1. What is the geographic responsibility of Fairfax County?
2. What components of the physical system should the County be responsible for?
3. What is the desired level of service?

The committee noted that level of service is already defined by the PFM and other building standards, but that most of the existing conveyance pipes are built to older standards, and as such, maintaining them to their existing level will only perpetuate problems downstream.

Committee members discussed whether the County should consider taking over responsibility for the entire physical stormwater drainage system, including private facilities. Such a shift in County responsibility could be accomplished either through a "top down" policy whereby the County would provide all maintenance unless otherwise requested by the property owner, who would then be responsible for BMP maintenance, or by simply offering maintenance at the property owner's request if the owner agrees to bring the BMP/structure up to its designed operating standard. Private owners that maintained their own BMPs could be given an appropriate credit on a utility fee if they agree to adequately maintain their facilities and such conditions are routinely inspected. The committee noted that the service fee must be equitable and that the County must provide services that the community will be able to recognize and value, in order to charge the fee.

The committee discussed the need for equity in determining and implementing a stormwater utility fee. Several committee members noted that the County should maintain all property, including private facilities, in order for the utility fee to be effective and to enforce a consistent standard. County staff stated that over half of all private facilities require major rehabilitation; private facilities do not have performance standards, and are only penalized if there is a health hazard.

On-site and off-site services were discussed, and the committee noted that owners with on-site stormwater facilities should receive credits against a stormwater utility fee, perhaps depending on the type of on-site facility present. For example, a private wet pond may provide a higher level of stormwater control (quantity and/or quality) than a



Stormwater Needs Assessment Project

private dry pond; therefore, the wet pond owner should receive higher level of credit against its utility liability. Ms. Treadway stated that the rate structure and credit system will be fine tuned to reflect the needs of a large and diverse community.

The committee asked for examples of successful stormwater utility fees that employed the use of credits. Ms. Treadway agreed to provide examples.

The committee discussed whether the industry building standards should be updated, and whether facility replacements should be based on current standards. General agreement was achieved that a feedback loop should be incorporated to keep maintenance and design standards current. As development has changed watershed hydrology throughout the County, the committee asked if an adequate SWMM model has been developed to describe stormwater flow for the entire physical system. County staff noted that the modeling results from the Watershed Management Plans, currently underway, will not provide flow data for individual pipes, but will describe smaller 100-acre sub watersheds.

Other suggestions forwarded by the committee for stormwater services included the promotion of the use of Low Impact Development (LID), daylighting, and stormwater pond retrofitting, including detaining and treating stormwater on-site whenever possible.

Ms. Treadway then asked the committee how Fairfax County should meet and comply with state and federal regulatory mandates. The committee noted the need to embrace the Board of Supervisor's agenda to protect and restore streams, noting that the streams will only get worse. County staff suggested that the Stream Protection Strategy results could be used as a measuring stick, and stated that SPD is developing a new streams index metric that describes stream quality.

In response to committee questions about the County's Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) and impaired streams, County staff indicated that the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has the right to impose regulatory conditions of Fairfax County to correct water impairments. It is then Fairfax County's responsibility to implement the plan to improve water quality above minimum standards. County staff noted that the County is in violation for excess bacteria in water, but it is produced largely by wildlife, not humans. The committee asked for a fact sheet that describes all voluntary and regulatory requirements for Fairfax County. Ms. Treadway agreed to provide the committee with this information.

County staff noted that the Board of Supervisors would not necessarily like to see an increase in County staff size. However, the implementation of a stormwater utility fee will likely require at least some additional staffing. Ms. Treadway noted that the County can outsource services where is it appropriate, but it is unrealistic to expect no increases in staff size with a change in the level and extent of service for stormwater.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.



Stormwater Needs Assessment Project

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Fairfax County Stormwater Advisory Committee will be held on November 9, 2004 at 7 P.M. in the Fairfax County Government Building.